



Department of Energy
Acquisition Regulation

No. 98-06
Date May 4, 1998

ACQUISITION LETTER

AUTHORITY

This Acquisition Letter (AL) is issued by the Procurement Executive pursuant to a delegation from the Secretary and under the authority of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Section 1.301(a)(2).

CONTENTS

CITATION

FAR Section 1.603
DEAR Subpart 901.603

TITLE

Career Development
Contracting Officer Warrants

Subject: Acquisition Career Development Program

- I. **Purpose.** The purpose of this Acquisition Letter is to provide implementation guidance regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) Acquisition Career Development Program.
- II. **Background.** Section 4307 of Public Law 93-400, enacted in 1995, amended the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act and expanded OFPP's responsibility to include establishing education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies comparable to those established in 1991 for the Department of Defense. On September 12, 1997, OFPP issued Policy Letter 97-01, entitled "Procurement System Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," which implemented P.L. 93-400. Among other things, Policy Letter 97-01 requires agency heads to establish education, training and career development programs for its acquisition workforce consistent with the policy letter.

In order to meet the requirements of Public Law and OFPP policy, the Department has created a new Acquisition Career Development Program, designed to meet the needs and expectations of the Department's customers for a highly skilled procurement workforce, and to provide the DOE procurement community with a common foundation of knowledge, tools, and capabilities necessary to successfully support the accomplishment of the Department's mission in a dynamic world.

- III. **Guidance.** Heads of Contracting Activities are responsible for identifying training needs, funding training, creating plans for individual procurement personnel development consistent with their sites and program mission strategic needs, and facilitating rotational assignments. The attached guidance shall be used to implement the Department's procurement training and career development certification program.

Department of Energy

***Acquisition
Career Development
Program***

Table of Contents

- I. Background**
- II. Objective of Program**
- III. Roles and Responsibilities**
- IV. Contracting Series Qualification Standards**
- V. Acquisition Certification Program**
- VI. Core and Desired/Elective Career Path Curriculum**
- VII. Program Certification Requirements**
- VIII. Career Paths**
- IX. Strategic Skills Assessment**
- X. Individual Development Plans**
- XI. Rotational Assignments**
- XII. Mentoring**
- XIII. Professional Associations**
- XIV. Promotions and Contracting Officer Warrants**
- XV. Acquisition Career Development Funding**
- XVI. Relation to Other Acquisition Workforce Programs**
- Appendix 1. Definitions**
- Appendix 2. Level I, II, and III Mandatory and Desired/Elective Courses**
- Appendix 3. Qualification Standards for Contract Specialists and Purchasing Agents**

I. Background

The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), enacted in 1991 and applicable to Department of Defense (DOD) agencies only, required the establishment of career development programs with mandatory training in acquisition-related responsibilities for advancement to critical acquisition positions; more rigorous qualification requirements than were applicable to civilian agency acquisition positions both at entry level and for promotion within critical acquisition positions; a Defense Acquisition University; and a budget line item to pay for the mandatory training. The Act prompted DOD to establish education, training, and experience standards for their acquisition positions and to provide a common foundation of knowledge necessary to ensure that the acquisition workforce was fully proficient.

Over the last few years, concerns have been expressed by those in this Administration, the Congress, and the federal acquisition community that the civilian agencies' workforce would be perceived over time as being markedly less professional than its DOD counterpart. To address these concerns, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued Policy Letter 92-3, dated June 24, 1992, to establish policies and a Government-wide standard for skill-based training for the Federal acquisition workforce. The OFPP policy letter established a set of contracting competencies and required contracting professionals to complete course work and related on-the-job training in order to attain an appropriate level of skill in each contract management duty. The Policy Letter was implemented as a change to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 1.603-1, linking the selection and appointment of contracting officers to OFPP's standards for skill-based training in performing contracting and purchasing duties. In addition, Public Law 93-400, enacted in 1995, amended the OFPP Act (Section 4307) and expanded OFPP's responsibility to include establishing education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies comparable to those established in 1991 for DOD. On September 12, 1997, OFPP issued Policy Letter 97-01, entitled "Procurement System Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," which implemented P.L. 93-400.

In addition, the National Performance Review directed the Federal Government to establish a well-trained, professional, procurement workforce--one that would keep pace with the demands placed upon it by an increasingly complex procurement process. Moreover, President Clinton signed Executive Order (E.O.) 12931, Federal Procurement Reform, in which he underscores the Administration's approach to managing procurement and requires agencies to establish career education programs for procurement professionals.

Department of Energy's (DOE) procurement training and career development certification program implements the OFPP and FAR requirements and meets the career development objectives of E.O. 12931. The new performance expectations that it places on acquisition personnel should increase their efficiency and effectiveness on the job, and potentially enhance their opportunities in the job market. This policy provides the DOE acquisition workforce with the information and guidelines they can use to plan their career development so as to become more competitive for higher level acquisition positions, both within and outside of DOE.

The standard set forth as Appendix 3 to this document must be applied not later than January 1, 1998.

Beginning January 1, 2000, all GS-1102 employees who have continuously incumbered GS-1102 positions since January 1, 1998 or earlier, will be considered to have met the "new" standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades 5 through 12 will be considered to meet the new basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through grade 12. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades 13, 14, and 15 will also be considered to meet the new standard for other GS-1102 positions at their same grade, including positions at other agencies. However, they will have to meet the new basic requirements in order to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, beginning January 1, 2000. In addition, all employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking another position.

V. Acquisition Certification Program

Three proficiency levels--I, II, and III--have been established covering training, experience and education requirements. The three levels are outlined below:

Certification Levels for Contracting (1102) and Purchasing (1105) Personnel

1102 Series Certification Levels

	<u>Grade</u>
Level I (Entry)	GS-05 thru 07
Level II (Intermediate)	GS-09 thru 12
Level III (Advanced)	GS-13 and above

1105 series Certification Levels

	<u>Grade</u>
Level I (Entry)	GS-05
Level II (Intermediate)	GS-06 thru 08
Level III (Advanced)	GS-9 and above

The following Level I, II, and III descriptions serve as guidelines on what is expected of contracting and procurement personnel at each certification level, within the parameter of the qualification standards (Attachment 3).

progress to GS-09 at Level II.

The Core and Desired/Elective Career Path Curriculum is set forth below, and a detailed description of core and desired/elective courses appears at Appendix 2.

VI. Core and Desired/Elective Career Path Curriculum

As DOE has long emphasized education, training, and the professionalism of its acquisition workforce, a variety of acquisition and acquisition-related workforce courses have been developed and offered across the DOE complex.

The DOE/ACD has established a "core curriculum," wherein there will be:

- 1) Specific accredited courses, which must be passed in order for employees to be eligible for higher level certification;
- 2) Completion of core courses in a logical sequence, so that the appropriate level of knowledge is available for performance at a particular level, and so that later courses can build on the knowledge gained in earlier offerings;

This structured approach will facilitate the opportunity for employees to demonstrate comprehension and ability to apply course knowledge and skills to analyze and resolve on-the-job performance issues indicating the desired level of proficiency.

In addition, in order to provide the DOE acquisition community with a knowledge base of the highest quality and which provides the student with not only the requisite skills and knowledge, but which expose them to the widest range of procurement thinking, approaches, and practices, the DOE core courses necessary at each of the "certification" levels, are outlined below:

Level I (Entry) Core Courses

CON 101	Fundamentals of Procurement
CON 104	Contract Pricing

Level II (Intermediate) Core Courses

CON 210	Government Contract Law
CON 202	Intermediate Contracting
CON 204	Intermediate Contract Pricing

Level III (Advanced) Core Courses

CON 301	Executive Contracting
CON 333	Management for Contracting Supervisors

VII. Program Certification Requirements

Certification is the process through which the Procurement Career Manager and the DOE/ACD program determines that an individual meets the mandatory standards (education, training, and experience) established for a career level in an acquisition career field. The applicable mandatory education, training, and experience standards established in this policy **MUST** be met, unless waived in writing by the DOE Procurement Executive. All acquisition workforce members must meet all of the mandatory certification standards at their current level before being assigned to a position in a higher certification level. In cases where a potential assignee to a vacant position in the next higher level has not met the mandatory certification standards, the Head of the Contracting Activity has 18 months to qualify the individual to meet the standards or justify a waiver from this policy. (See *Section B, Waivers*, below) For example, an employee at the GS-7 level cannot be promoted to a LEVEL II position without having completed certification requirements for LEVEL I. This individual would then have 18 months to complete all LEVEL II certification requirements.

Once an individual is certified at a particular level, that individual remains certified at that level regardless of any new requirements made effective after certification, unless Congress enacts a statutory requirement for a new education or training standard and designates it as "continuing education and training." When a new requirement is designated as "continuing education and training," individuals will have 36 months to complete the requirement. Failure to complete new requirements, or to justify a waiver, will result in loss of certification.

1. Acquisition position certification standards

Each acquisition position shall have a certification standard path established for it. The certification standard shall be one of the three career levels for that position category (see Section VI, Core and Desired/Elective Career Path Curriculum, above). The education, training, and experience standards for a position's career level are the standards the incumbent must meet. If an employee is assigned to a position and does not meet the applicable certification standards, the participant shall have 18 months in which to achieve the standards, or obtain a waiver. For education and training requirements, the employee may obtain equivalent credit via the process of "Alternate Education and Training Methods."

2. Substituting Education for Experience

In determining if an employee has the requisite experience for an acquisition position, GS-13 and above, up to 12 months of time spent pursuing a program of academic training or education in acquisition may be counted toward fulfilling the EXPERIENCE standards for the position.

developmental opportunities needed to both keep them current in a dynamic acquisition profession, as well as preparing them for the future as the leaders and managers of tomorrow.

For the purpose of maintaining currency of acquisition knowledge and skills, contract specialists (GS-1102) and Contracting Officers who have satisfied the mandatory training requirements shall obtain at least 80 hours of continuing education or training every two (2) years.

Heads of Contracting Activities should ensure that existing acquisition staff and managers are provided the opportunity for "refresher" training as needed to keep current on emerging acquisition requirements, policies, issues, and techniques. This may include, but is not limited to, DOE sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental assignments.

The training and experience needs of existing acquisition staff and managers should be determined, and individual development plans should reflect "currency" training and assignments, as well as career development. In addition, as the role of the acquisition professional evolves, DOE Procurement Directors and their staffs need to be able to provide the strategic business advice and consultation needed to support their customers, including becoming more knowledgeable in the acquisition of commodities and services not previously required. There also needs to be a periodic, forward-looking assessment of local workforce demographics, skills, and capabilities to ensure that the Procurement organization is prepared for the future. (See Section IX, Strategic Skills Assessments, and Section X, Individual Development Plans.)

B. Mandatory Training Completion by Fulfillment

In those cases where an employee believes that they have acquired, through experience or other courses, the necessary knowledge provided by a mandatory acquisition training course, they may seek credit for such a mandatory course through petition to the Acquisition Career Manager, OMS/HQ. If approval to this request is granted, attendance at that course will not be required.

Fulfillment generally occurs when the participant is at a career level above the level at which the training is mandatory, but also may occur when a participant has been at the full performance level of a career field for a substantial period of time, and is performing at a more than satisfactory level.

If the Director of Procurement at the contracting activity and the employee believe that attendance at the mandatory course is unnecessary, the HCA must submit a request in writing for course completion by fulfillment, detailing the rationale for the request. If the DOE Acquisition Career Manager concurs, the cognizant Director of Procurement will be so notified.

IDPs should be updated periodically to ensure accuracy and currency.

XI. Rotational Assignments

Rotational assignments are a valuable source of experience and opportunity for growth. They can provide access to opportunities to demonstrate employees comprehension and ability to apply course knowledge and skills to analyze and resolve on-the-job performance issues indicating the desired level of proficiency, as well as cross-training and skills in other disciplines. In addition, rotational assignments provide the individual with exposure to acquisition-related functions fostering a better understanding of other disciplines, create a better appreciation of the various functional contributors to the acquisition process, and further the building of positive team relationships. (Voluntary)

XII. Mentoring

Mentoring is a structured, but informal, agreement between two individuals outside the normal employee/supervisory relationship, wherein the "mentor" provides assistance to the participant (protege) in her/his career development planning process. The mentor is usually an individual who has progressed in their career and who can provide insight and guidance on career choices, opportunities, and vehicles to a junior individual usually in the same profession. Mentoring can allow acquisition career participants to receive valuable coaching and feedback regarding their career plans and choices. (Voluntary)

XIII. Professional Associations

Membership in professional associations allows the acquisition professional to keep abreast of current topics and trends important to job performance, and can provide opportunities for cross-fertilization of knowledge, experiences, information and ideas on a variety of issues. Professional associations can provide the acquisition professional with sources of conferences, seminars, workshops, video-telecasts, printed literature, research, databases, training, and other valuable career developing information and opportunities. In addition, involvement with professional associations provides employees with the opportunity to meet others who have similar interests and careers, and facilitates networking opportunities. (Voluntary)

XIV. Promotions and Contracting Officer Warrants

Contracting and procurement personnel must clearly understand that any future promotion or issuance of a contracting officer's warrant may depend on the successful completion of the DOE/ACD core courses within their appropriate levels. Any requested exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing by the HCA to the Acquisition Career Manager, OMS/HQ, for approval of the DOE Procurement Executive.

Appendix 1. Definitions

1. ***Acquisition*** - The planning, design, development, testing, contracting, production, logistics support, and disposal of systems, equipment, facilities, supplies, or services that are intended for use in, or support of, Department of Energy missions.
2. ***Acquisition Experience*** - Experience gained while assigned to an acquisition position. Also includes related cooperative education and other acquisition developmental assignments. Includes experience in DOE acquisition positions and in comparable positions outside of DOE.
3. ***Acquisition Positions*** - Positions in the acquisition system with duties that fall in an acquisition category. These positions are normally located in Headquarters and field organizations.
4. ***Acquisition Position Categories*** - Functional subsets of acquisition positions. These subset positions include purchasing, contracting, etc.
5. ***Acquisition Workforce*** - The personnel comprising the acquisition system. The acquisition workforce includes permanent employees who occupy acquisition positions.
6. ***Career Development*** - The professional development of employee potential by integrating the capabilities, needs, interests, and aptitudes of employees in acquisition positions, through a planned, organized, and systematic method of training and development designed to meet organizational objectives. Career development is accomplished through a combination of work assignments, job rotation, training, education, and self-development programs.
7. ***Career Levels*** - Categories of education, training, and experience standards that provide the framework for potential progression in a career field. There are three career levels: (I) Entry, (II) Intermediate, (III) Advanced or Senior.
8. ***Career Path*** - The range of opportunities at each career level and the optimum route for vertical and horizontal progression in a career field.
9. ***Certification*** - The process through which the DOE determines that an individual meets mandatory education, training, and experience standards established for a career level (Levels I, II, and III) in the acquisition field.
10. ***Defense Acquisition University (DAU)*** - A consortium of DOD education and training institutions and organizations providing mandatory acquisition courses for certification.
11. ***Equivalent Course*** - A course that has been determined by the Procurement Career Manager, DOE/HQ, to contain the level of knowledge that would enable individuals who take the course to perform as if they had completed the comparable designated mandatory course.

Appendix 2. Level I, II, and III Mandatory and Desired/Elective Courses

DESCRIPTION OF COURSES, RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION

The following courses are sponsored by the DOE/ACD. Each course is designated either "C" for core (mandatory). or "D/E" for desired/elective" (refresher or continued development). Any course prerequisites are also noted along with a mandatory (M) or desired (D) designation.

LEVEL I: (ENTRY) COURSES

Contract Specialist GS-05 - 07

EXPERIENCE: (M) 1 year acquisition experience

EDUCATION: (M) As of January 1, 1998, must have a Bachelor's Degree, or 24 semester hrs in business related subjects, or pass an equivalency exam (TBD), unless waived by the DOE Senior Procurement Executive.

CONTRACTING FUNDAMENTALS - (Basic Procurement) (C)

Contracting Fundamentals (Basic Procurement) is a general survey course in contracting basics for personnel just entering or with up to three years of practical experience in the field of contracting. Its broad scope covers the broad range of contracting procedures as prescribed by the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR); the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulations and Procurement Guidebook; applicable statutes, ethics policies, and other pertinent authorities that govern contracting operations. (20 class days)

CONTRACT PRICING - (Cost and Price Analysis) (C)

This course is designed for entry-level contracting personnel. Contract Pricing provides the foundation for the study and practice of cost and price analysis. Topics include a review of the various types of contracts, sources of data for cost and price analysis; methods for analyzing direct and indirect costs; methods for performing profit analysis; ethics in contract pricing; and a selection of current pricing topics. Individual and group negotiation workshops address the fundamentals of the negotiation process, including essential techniques, strategies, and tactics. An actual cost analysis is used to illustrate the various concepts and methods covered in the course.

NOTE: Basic Algebra skills are required for successful completion of this course. Personnel accepted for this course will receive a math review book and are encouraged to complete that review prior to attending the course. (14 class days)

LEVEL II: (INTERMEDIATE) COURSES

Contract Specialist GS-09 - 12

Experience: (M) 2 yrs contracting experience in acquisition positions of increasing complexity and responsibility.

Education: (M) As of January 1, 1998, must have Bachelor's Degree, or 24 semester hrs in business-related subjects, or pass equivalency exam unless waived by the Agency Senior Procurement Executive.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT LAW (C)

This course provides an understanding of the impact of Government contract law on daily decision making in acquisition. It introduces basic legal principles and sources of contract law as they apply to the Government's acquisition of supplies, services, and construction. Court cases and administrative decisions (Government Accounting Office, Boards of Contract Appeals) are discussed with emphasis on how the law affects Government/contractor relationships and ethics, and how to avoid and handle legal disputes. The target audience for this course is intermediate level personnel who have some experience with Government contracting and are responsible for contract formation or management. (10 class days)

INTERMEDIATE CONTRACT PRICING (C)

Intermediate Contract Cost and Pricing reinforces pricing skills taught in ACD-102 and develops skills at performing more advanced pricing duties. The four areas of concentration cover: quantitative methods for cost and price analysis; advanced pre-award pricing decisions; post-award pricing decisions; and general contract pricing issues. Students are provided MS DOS public domain software to be used in the quantitative methods section of instruction. Students will develop skills at pricing leases; developing pre-negotiation positions on proposed indirect rates with emphasis on depreciation; general and administrative costs; individual research and development costs; bid and proposal costs; fringe benefits; environmental pools; and uncompensated overtime; and analyzing the cost realism of Best and Final Offers. Students will also develop skills at estimating cost-to-complete; pricing equitable adjustments (with exercises related to claims and contract modifications); adjusting and applying indirect cost rates which features an exercise in "quick closeout," and defective pricing. Students will be required to develop a case study on a contract pricing problem, based on their prior contracting experience. These problems provide a basis for classroom presentations and situations analysis corresponding to relevant contract pricing topics, as well as applying ethical principles and developing appropriate solutions. (10 class days) (Prerequisite: Contract Pricing)

PERFORMANCE-BASED CONTRACTING FOR NON-ROUTINE SUPPLIES & SERVICES (D/E)

This PBC (Non-Routine) course covers the essential elements of Performance-Based Contracting as they pertain to non-routine supplies and services (e.g., R&D efforts), the differences between PBC for routine services and non-routine services, and the development of performance-based work statements. The course also discusses the problems in developing the Project Surveillance Plan and its importance. Contractor performance and the differences between oversight surveillance and surveillance by insight, and the juxtaposition of these two philosophies as they relate to OFPP's PBC policy are addressed.

Methods of incentive contracting and the importance of multiple incentive contracts within the context of PBC are major course considerations. This course is recommended for all contracting personnel, project/program managers and for contracting officer's technical representatives. (4.5 class days)

LEVEL III: (ADVANCED) COURSES
Contract Specialist GS-13 and above

Experience: (M) Minimum 4 years contracting experience in acquisition position of increasing complexity

Education: (M) As of January 1, 1998, must have Bachelor's Degree, that included or is supplemented by 24 semester hours in business related subjects, or pass equivalency exam unless waived by the Senior Procurement Executive.

EXECUTIVE CONTRACTING (CON 301) (C)

Executive Contracting is a unique forum for senior personnel in the contracting career field to examine a wide range of acquisition issues. Through guest speaker lectures, discussions, workshops, and a Capitol Hill visit to observe Congressional activities, this course provides an intensive executive level view of current issues and events in acquisition and, in particular, contracting. Topic areas cover: Contracting Policy (FAR Council, Office of Procurement Policy (OFPP), current, actual and proposed changes, and changing technologies, External Forces (SBA, GAO, and legislative statutes), and Work Environment (contracting innovations, change, ethics, etc.). Participants will be able to discuss the current, actual, and projected DOE contracting and management issues as they relate to contracting; and identify and discuss the impact on present acquisition and contracting practices of recently established or proposed policies, regulations, directives, or studies. They also gain an awareness of how legislation and procurement policy makers operate and will work with issues, problems, and the community at large. Participants will network with other contracting personnel on various approaches as a means of understanding and, if appropriate, implementing ideas presented in the course. (5 class days)

MANAGEMENT FOR CONTRACTING SUPERVISORS (CON 333) (C)

Management for Contracting Supervisors spans management and leadership theory and practices applicable to a wide range of situations ranging from complex pre- and post-award procurement scenarios and detailed management cases, to the legal and ethical analysis of current acquisition practices. This is an inter-active workshop designed for supervisors, managers and other senior procurement personnel. It uses case studies, critical incidents, small group interaction, and self-assessments to analyze and discuss government procurement management issues to sharpen skills in assessment and interpretation of the variables that affect contract performance and mission accomplishment. Participants are encouraged to apply and share their experiences and expertise. The case scenarios are supplemented and reinforced by other materials including: guest lecturers, panel discussions, management leadership self-assessments, and issues brought to class by the students. Participants apply their expertise within the case scenarios and other material to expand their knowledge of supervisory and management techniques and approaches to meeting mission requirements

LEVEL I AND II COURSES FOR GS-1105 SERIES

LEVEL I: (ENTRY) COURSES

Purchasing Agent GS-05

Simplified Acquisition Fundamentals (C)

The simplified Acquisition Fundamentals course teaches acquisition personnel to use simplified acquisition procedures (SAP) to accomplish acquisitions below the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT). Participants will learn to locate and apply policies, procedures, and guidance contained in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The course emphasizes the importance of customer satisfaction, market research, performance based specifications, buying commercial items, best value source selection, and administration of contracts for commercial items when using SAP.

LEVEL II: (INTERMEDIATE) COURSES

Purchasing Agent GS-07 - 08

Experience: (M) 1 Year in the Purchasing Career Field

Education: (D) 64 semester hours of undergraduate work with emphasis in business

Intermediate Simplified Acquisition Procedures (C)

This course provides current or potential simplified acquisition contracting officers with the skills necessary to provide guidance and direction about the more complex actions under the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT). Participants use an integrated case study to assess and make decisions on a complicated simplified acquisition. The course provides practical experience in procurement planning, customer satisfaction, market research, performance-based specifications, buying commercial items, best value source selection, and innovative problem solving skills. (2 weeks)

Prerequisite: Simplified Acquisition Fundamentals

LEVEL III (ADVANCED) COURSES

Purchasing Agent GS-09 and higher

Experience: (M) At least 2 years of experience in purchasing

Education: (D) 64 semester hours of undergraduate work with emphasis in business

[No courses identified to date for this level]

Appendix 3.

Qualification Standards for Contract Specialists and Purchasing Agents

QUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR CONTRACT SPECIALIST (GS-1102)

Effective 1/1/98

Basic Requirements (GS-5 through GS-12).

A. A 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field.

OR

B. At least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management, or a passing score on an examination or examinations considered by the Director, Office of Personnel Management to demonstrate skills, knowledge, or abilities comparable to that of an individual who has completed at least 24 semester hours (or the equivalent) of study in any of these academic disciplines, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

Applicants who meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement qualify for positions at the GS-7 level.

The following table shows the amounts of education and/or experience required to qualify for positions GS-7 through GS-12 covered by this standard.

GRADE	EDUCATION	OR SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE
GS-7	1 full academic year of graduate education or law school or superior academic achievement	1 year equivalent to atleast GS-5
GS-9	2 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or master's or equivalent graduate degree or LL.B. or J.D.	1 year equivalent to at least GS-7
GS-11	3 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or Ph. D. Or equivalent doctoral degree	1 year equivalent to at least GS-9
GS-12 AND ABOVE	None	1 year equivalent to at least next lower grade
Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for all grade levels for which both education and experience are acceptable.		

meet the new basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through grade 12. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at grades 13, 14, and 15 will also be considered to meet the new standard for other GS-1102 positions at their same grade, including positions at other agencies. However, they will have to meet the new basic requirements in order to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, beginning January 1, 2000. In addition, all employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking another position.

Waiver Authority

The DOE Senior Procurement Executive may waive one of the two sets of education requirements set forth above for an applicant for a GS 13 and above. A request for Procurement Executive waiver shall be submitted in writing with a certification by the Head of the Contracting Activity that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility based on demonstrated analytical and decision making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience. It is expected that this waiver authority will be used only in rare and unusual circumstances, such as when no otherwise qualified candidates are readily available.

QUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR PURCHASING AGENT (GS-1105)

Basic Requirements (GS-05).

Selection into the 1105 series is based on demonstrated or potential abilities in the field.

Basic Requirements (GS-07) :

Completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the agency under Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act for progression to a GS-07 purchasing position --including at least one year of experience in the Procurement field.

Basic Requirements (GS-09 and above).

A. Completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the agency under Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act for progression to GS-09 purchasing positions--including at least two years of progressively more responsible experience in the Procurement field.